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Editorial Notes and Comment



DR. JAMES P. SMITH'S many friends are sympathizing with him most deeply in the great sorrow that has come to him. On October 15th the angels of God came to his home and took to her heavenly home his beloved wife. Mrs. Smith had been in bad health for several years. She was an earnest Christian woman, whose life was full of good works. She was a devoted wife and mother, and a friend beloved by a large circle outside of her own family. In her own home a graceful and delightful hostess, she gave pleasure and joy to all who shared her hospitality. She was a daughter of Major and Mrs. Horace Lacy, of Spottsylvania county, Va. She leaves besides her husband, two daughters and four sons to feel the sadness of her loss till God shall call them to join her. They are Mrs. James B. Wood, of our mission in China, Mrs. Charles F. Myers, wife of the pastor of the First church, Greensboro, N. C., Mr. Lacy Smith, of Charlotte, N. C., Rev. James P., Jr., of Lexington, Ky., William B. and Graham, of Richmond, Va. For many years Dr. Smith was editor of the Central Presbyterian, which is continued in this paper.

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THE SYNOD OF VIRGINIA meets in Lexington this week, but it is not the first time by any means that it has enjoyed the hospitality of the good people of that town. The first meeting of the Synod, constituted by the General Assembly of the Church, was held in 1788 in New Providence church, in Rockbridge county, Rev. William Graham, moderator. As there was not a quorum present the Synod met the next year, 1789, in Lexington, with the Rev. John Todd, moderator. After that time the Synod met in Lexington in 1802, 1805, 1810, 1813, 1821, 1826, 1837, 1842, 1855, 1864 and 1893. At the meeting in 1893 the opening sermon was preached by the retiring moderator, the Rev. T. W. Hooper, D. D., and the Rev. R. P. Kerr, D. D., was elected moderator. The meeting of the Synod in 1864, the Rev. Dr. C. H. Read, moderator, is memorable in the history of the Presbyterian Church in Virginia by reason of the fact that at that time the Old and New School sections of the Church were united most heartily.

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"THANKING you for your good paper and wishing it increasing success." This is what a subscriber wrote, and then asked that his paper be discontinued. We are taught that, if we want our prayers answered, we must do all we can to bring about the answer. We wonder if the same principle does not apply in wishing for success. The one essential requisite to success in a newspaper is to have subscribers who pay for the paper. Everyone who stops his paper does just that much to destroy its success.

"THY WORD is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." The figure of speech here used by the Psalmist has sometimes seemed rather obscure. But there have been discovered in the ruins of Pompeii, which was destroyed about A. D. 70, shoes, or rather sandals, which were made with small lamps on their toes. As one walked along with these lamps on his feet, they would throw light on his pathway, thus enabling him to keep in the right path and avoid obstructions. So God's word guides and directs those who will walk in its light.

A Prayer

"Laid on thine altar, O my Lord divine,
Accept this gift today for Jesus' sake,
I have no jewels to adorn thy shrine,
Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make;
But here I bring within my trembling hand
This will of mine, a thing that seemeth small—
And thou alone, O Lord, canst understand
How when I yield thee this I yield mine all."

"Hidden therein thy searching eyes can see
Struggles of passion, visions of delight;
All that I have or am, or fain would be;
Deep loves, fond hopes, and longings infinite.
It hath been wet with tears and dimmed with sighs,
Clenched in my grasp till beauty hath it none!
Now from thy foot-stool where it vanquished lies,
The prayer ascendeth—may thy will be done!"

"Take it, O Father, ere my courage fail,
And merge it so in thine own will that e'en
If in some desperate hour my cries prevail,
And thou give back my gift, it may have been
So changed, so purified, so fair have grown,
So one with thee so filled with peace divine,
I may not know or feel it as mine own,
But gaining back my will may find it thine."

ONE of the interesting and gratifying things to be noticed in the secular press of the present day is the prominence being given to religious matters. It has not been many years since the secular papers had very little to say about religion, or if they said anything, it was usually to make light of it, or even to oppose it. Today much more attention is given than formerly to the news of the churches and religious work. But especially noticeable is the whole spirit shown to the whole subject of religion. It is not an uncommon occurrence to find one of the daily papers treating these matters editorially. They do not preach sermons, but they deal with the questions in a sane and sensible way, showing that they are recognizing religion as a matter of importance to the great mass of their readers. The editors can do nothing that will add more to the uplift of the community than by treating of these subjects. May the good work go on.

A SAN FRANCISCO paper says: "Presbyterian circles about the bay are agog over the unprecedented action of the Bay Cities Presbytery, in Berkeley, in granting a junior student in the San Francisco Theological Seminary a license to preach for one year, without subjecting him to an examination as to his religious beliefs and opinions." So far as disregard for law is concerned the Presbytery could scarcely have gone further. The Book of Church Order prescribes very fully and very carefully what examinations a candidate must stand before he is licensed. The Cumberland church lowered its educational standards very greatly, but we never heard of its licensing a man without any examination. The Book of Church Order makes no provision for licensing a man for a limited time. Here again the Presbytery violated the law. With this Presbytery licensing a man without examining him and New York Presbytery licensing and ordaining men, who, when examined, show that they do not hold the vital doctrines of the Presbyterian Church is it any wonder that the conservative Presbyterians of the South do not care to become a part of a Church which permits such practices.

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SHUT-INS need more of sympathy than they usually receive. Think what it means to lie in bed day after day or just to sit in an easy chair unable to move. Usually this condition is accompanied with pain and suffering. But even suppose there is no physical pain, the loneliness is most depressing and the isolation from the activities of the world is very trying. A visit from some one who comes in with a smile and a few bright words will bring joy. A bunch of flowers or a basket of fruit sent in will carry cheer with them. A simple note or card with a message of kindly feeling will do much to drive away the tedium of a long day. The members of the church can do much in this way if they will look for and use the opportunities which may be found on every hand. It will be a great help to the one who does the kindly deed, as well as to the one who receives it. It is the duty of the church, as well of the individual, to look after such cases. If it would look them up it would be found that much can be done to brighten the lives of these shut-ins. One of the best ways for doing this will be to have a telephone put in so connected with the church that the invalid can hear the services and the preaching. There are several kinds of telephones, which will answer for this purpose. The cost is not great, but we can scarcely measure the good that would thus be accomplished in adding joy to the life of one of God's afflicted ones.

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Consider when you are enraged at any one how you should feel if he should die during the dispute.—Shenstone.